

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 256 055

EA 017 680

TITLE Teacher Quality and the Role of the Principal.
INSTITUTION California State Board of Education, Sacramento.
PUB DATE 8 Feb 85
NOTE 16p.
PUB TYPE Viewpoints (120) -- Legal/Legislative/Regulatory
Materials (090)

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Administrator Role; Administrator Selection; Career
Ladders; *Educational Policy; Elementary Secondary
Education; *Instructional Improvement; Position
Papers; Principals; Recognition (Achievement);
Teacher Certification; Teacher Education; *Teacher
Qualifications; Teacher Recruitment; Teacher Role;
Teacher Salaries; Teaching Conditions

IDENTIFIERS *California

ABSTRACT

As an adjunct to the California State Board of Education's 1983 report, "Raising Expectations: Model Graduation Requirements," this paper presents legislative and administrative recommendations on teacher quality and on the principal's role. The State Board's Master Plan Committee, which also produced "Raising Expectations," developed these recommendations with advice from professional organizations and in collaboration with the State Department of Education. The subjects of the recommendations are (1) admission standards for teacher education, (2) improved teacher education programs, (3) alternative certification, (4) teacher salaries, (5) professionalism for teachers, (6) improving teaching conditions, (7) lesson preparation time, (8) career ladders, (9) recognition for outstanding performance, (10) staff development, (11) teacher recruitment in high schools and colleges, (12) teacher dismissal, and (13) the principal's role and principal selection. (MCG)

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TEACHER QUALITY AND THE ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL

California State Board of Education

February 8, 1985

EA 017 680

CALIFORNIA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Teacher Quality and the Role of the Principal

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CALIFORNIA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Teacher Quality and the Role of the Principal

Preface

"Our nation is at risk," reports the National Commission on Excellence in Education. Then, in its report to the American people, the commission identifies the reasons: "Our once unchallenged preeminence in commerce, industry, science, and technological innovation is being overtaken by competitors throughout the world... the educational foundations of our society are presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a nation and a people. What was unimaginable a generation ago has begun to occur - others are matching and surpassing our educational attainments."

Just as the national commission points to the problems in education throughout the United States, the California State Board of Education recognizes the crisis in education facing the State. Accordingly, the Board in August 1982 formed its Committee on a Master Plan for Excellence in California Schools (Master Plan Committee) and charged it in the fall of 1982 to establish model high school graduation requirements as a matter of first importance in improving the quality of education in the State.

Over a period of nine months, the Master Plan Committee developed the model graduation requirements with widespread input from the entire educational community. This effort culminated with the unanimous approval by the Board at its meeting on June 10, 1983, of the model recommended by the Master Plan Committee and its publication in September 1983 of Raising Expectations: Model Graduation Requirements.²

At the time it completed preparation of the model, the Board was "aware that other current conditions may present difficulties in the implementation of the model... The Board remains committed to continue to seek solutions to these problems."³

In accordance with this commitment, the Board charged the Master Plan Committee in the fall of 1983 as a matter of next highest priority to make recommendations on teacher quality and the role of the principal. This was

¹A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform. Prepared by the National Commission on Excellence in Education. Washington, U.S. Department of Education, April 1983, pg. 5.

²Raising Expectations: Model Graduation Requirements. State Board of Education and State Department of Education, 721 Capitol Mall, Sacramento, CA 95814, September 1983.

³Ibid, pp. viii and ix.

consistent with the prime importance accorded these two components for effective schools in many national and state reports, including A Nation at Risk⁴ and the California State Superintendent of Public Instruction's Task Force on School Effectiveness⁵.

The Master Plan Committee launched this effort with a Forum on Excellence in Professional Education, held on November 16, 1983, in which leaders of many segments of the educational community presented their views and recommendations on these two topics.

As a result of this and other input received from representatives of many professional organizations over a period of nine months and in close collaboration with the State Department of Education, the Master Plan Committee submits the following report and recommendations for approval by the State Board of Education.

A. Teacher Quality

1. Admission Criteria for California Teacher Education Programs

The Board endorses the recommendations made by the National Commission on Excellence in Education⁶:

"Persons preparing to teach should be required to meet high educational standards, to demonstrate an aptitude for teaching, and to demonstrate competence in an academic discipline. Colleges and universities offering teacher preparation programs should be judged by how well their graduates meet these criteria."

The Board applauds the steps taken by California teacher education institutions to implement this recommendation--in particular, the action of the Academic Senate of the California State University in March 1983, when it unanimously approved major reforms in the teacher education and training programs, including a provision restricting admission to students in the upper half of the undergraduate population on each campus "to assure that only students with the potential to become excellent teachers are admitted."

While this is a step in the right direction, the Board, however, believes that much more needs to be done to address the serious problem that education departments in colleges and universities face presently in drawing on the least academically qualified of available college students; specifically:

Recommendation 1: The State Board of Education supports the efforts of teacher education institutions in developing criteria for screening applicants to their programs and encourages all such institutions to develop rigorous requirements for prospective teacher candidates.

⁴ A Nation at Risk, pp. 30, 31.

⁵ Raising Expectations, p. vi.

⁶ A Nation at Risk, p. 30.

Accordingly, the Board has referred to the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC) the question of screening applicants to teacher education programs, including the possibility of requiring diagnostic tests and the California Basic Educational Skills Test (CBEST). CPEC responded to this request with its report of June 11, 1984,⁷ containing a survey of current practices and the following recommendation:

"Because of the differences in kind and in rigor among the criteria used for admission to teacher preparation programs by campuses even within the same system, the lack of any centralized information about the teacher preparation programs in the University of California, and the problems in using the California Basic Educational Skills Test both as a screening device and a diagnostic instrument, Commission staff recommends to the Commission that a meeting be convened to share admissions information among and within the segments to discuss the need for change in current practice and policy, and to begin to resolve other issues identified in this report. The State Board of Education and the Commission on Teacher Credentialing should be closely involved in this project, and independent institutions that prepare teachers for the State's public schools should be invited to participate."

This recommendation was approved by CPEC's Statutory Advisory Committee in July 1984, and such a meeting is now being organized with the possible involvement of the Blue Ribbon Commission on the Teaching Profession in California.

Recommendation 2. The State Board of Education recommends that the Blue Ribbon Commission consider the establishment of minimum criteria for admission to all teacher education programs.

2. Alternatives to Current California Teacher Education Programs

In response to changing needs and demands for teachers at all levels, many states have recently adopted new or alternative programs for teacher education.

In California, such efforts have only recently been initiated, most notably with the California Roundtable's proposal for "A New Teacher Certification Process."⁸ This proposal was presented to the Master Plan Committee by Mr. Daniel Weiler at its meeting on September 13, 1984, and given a careful review by the Master Plan Committee and representatives of professional organizations in attendance at that meeting.

Upon recommendation of the Master Plan Committee, the Board voted at its meeting on September 14 "that this worthwhile report be given to the Blue Ribbon Commission for its consideration."

⁷Response to request from the State Board of Education regarding the Screening of Applicants to Teacher Education Programs, California Postsecondary Education Commission, Policy Development Committee, June 11, 1984.

⁸The California Roundtable's proposal for A New Teacher Certification Process, Berman, Weiler Associates, 2000 Center Street, Box 1095, Berkeley, CA 94704.

Recommendation 3. The State Board of Education strongly encourages efforts by the Legislature to address the critical problems of recruiting talented persons to enter teaching and providing them with high quality preparation and support.

3. Possible Changes in Teacher Credentialing Procedures in California

Dissatisfaction with current teacher credentialing procedures in California has been evident for some time. Causes for dissatisfaction vary from those expressed by teacher organizations and others who believe that teachers must play a much larger role in determining entry standards to the profession than they do at present to those which cite the lack of accountability of the present Commission on Teacher Credentialing to any single elected or appointed official body. A particular difficulty for the Board has been the fact that, while it has constitutional responsibility of approving or disapproving regulations prepared by CTC, it has no power to change them and no formal means of providing input during the development stage of these regulations.

Recommendation 4. The State Board of Education has supported Assemblyman Bader's Bill 486, and assigns the Master Plan Committee the task of the review of alternatives for governance of the CTC.

4. Higher Salaries for Teachers

The Board endorses the recommendation made by the National Commission on Excellence in Education:⁹

"Salaries for the teaching profession should be increased and should be professionally competitive, market-sensitive, and performance-based. Salary, promotion, tenure, and retention decisions should be tied to an effective evaluation system that includes peer review so that superior teachers can be rewarded, average ones encouraged, and poor ones either improved or terminated."

The Board applauds the provisions for higher salaries contained in Senate Bill 813 approved in 1933.

Recommendation 5. The State Board of Education urges the Legislature, local school boards and all concerned segments of the educational community to consider continued implementation of the recommendation of the National Commission on Excellence in Education concerning teachers' salaries as an item of highest priority.

5. Professionalism for Teachers

There is widespread recognition that an essential ingredient to raise the quality of teaching and to attract and retain well qualified teachers is to give teaching a status as a profession similar to that attained by most other professions, such as medicine, law, engineering, and so forth.

⁹A Nation at Risk, p. 30.

There are many factors which must be addressed to bring this about. Many of them are covered in other sections of this report; indeed all sections of this report include actions and recommendations designed to elevate teaching to the professional status which it should enjoy in order to attract and retain the quality professionals which other professions make such serious efforts to attract.

Basic to elevating teaching to this desirable status is the need to give teachers a much larger role in the decision-making process in the same way that practitioners of other professions have been granted this responsibility.

Recommendation 6. The State Board of Education recognizes the need to give teachers a stronger role in appropriate decision-making bodies which affect their profession. The State Board of Education, therefore, recommends that whenever advisory committees, commissions, task forces, etc. are established, classroom teachers be included in the composition of that body.

6. Improving the Teaching Environment

An excellent account of this is contained in Improving the Attractiveness of the K-12 Teaching Profession in California¹⁰. This publication singles out, in addition to the factors mentioned elsewhere in this report, the following factors as necessary for restructuring the teacher's work environment to create a greater sense of personal competence and control for teachers (the listing of the factors should not be interpreted as implying that all of them have been endorsed by the State Board of Education):

- Reducing class sizes
- Providing additional support services in the classroom, such as teacher aides
- Reducing classroom disruptions
- Limiting severely the amount of paperwork required
- Redesigning the workplace physically to encourage interaction among teachers and reduce isolation
- Fostering team teaching and other cooperative efforts in order to reduce isolation and increase intellectual challenges
- Formally providing new teachers with special support and guidance from experienced teachers
- Involving teachers in the development of school goals and performance expectations
- Encouraging interchange between teachers and visitors or temporary employees from private industry, that is, not limiting visitors' contact to students and classrooms, but structuring time for adult interactions as well.
- Honoring outstanding teachers

¹⁰ Improving the Attractiveness of the K-12 Teaching Profession in California, Prepared by a Study Group for the California Round Table on Educational Opportunity, March 1983. (Available from the Department's Bureau of Publications Sales; phone (916) 445-1260.)

¹¹ Ibid, p. 49.

Recommendation 7. The State Board of Education urges all districts to review their current practices on the factors of teaching environment indicated above and initiate changes wherever possible in order to enhance the attractiveness, and thereby the effectiveness, of the teaching profession within the districts.

In its meetings with teachers and other segments of the educational community, the Board received at almost every meeting expressions of serious concern about classroom interruptions by intercom and public address systems. Teachers are unanimous in feeling that this is a particularly annoying and demeaning interference with their duties and one which can easily be eliminated without cost.

The Board has, therefore, worked for and strongly supported, in conjunction with the State Department of Education, the California Teachers Association, California Federation of Teachers, and the Parent Teachers Association, Assembly Bill 2535 (Chapter 495, Statutes of 1984), by Assemblywoman Teresa Hughes, which was signed into law by the Governor on July 17, 1984, mandating the following:

- Each governing board of a school district is to formally address the problem of classroom interruptions and adopt a policy to control those interruptions, consistent with local circumstances and practices.
- The Superintendent of Public Instruction shall develop and distribute to each governing board of a school district a model policy for the reduction and control of classroom interruptions, including, but not limited to, intercom and public address system use.

The Board is now working closely with the State Department of Education in developing a model policy. An advisory committee has been appointed by the Department on which the Board is represented. The policy is expected to be mailed to the school districts as soon as possible.

Recommendation 8. The State Board of Education urges all districts to review the model policy on classroom interruptions as soon as it is received and, in accordance with AB 2535, adopt a policy consistent with the model designed to reduce classroom interruptions to the maximum extent possible.

7. Preparation Time

In meeting with members of the Board, teachers have emphasized the importance of preparation time for quality teaching. The Board recognizes this need, but realizes that the amount of preparation time needed by teachers varies greatly with the level of teaching and, even more importantly, the subject matter being taught.

8. Career Ladder in Teaching Including the Mentor Teacher Program

The Board endorses the recommendations made by the National Commission on Excellence in Teaching:¹²

"School boards, administrators, and teachers should cooperate to develop career ladders for teachers that distinguish among the beginning instructor, the experienced teacher, and the master teacher."

"Master teachers should be involved in designing teacher preparation programs and in helping teachers during their probationary years."

The Board applauds the provision for the establishment of a Mentor Teacher Program in Senate Bill 813 as an excellent start to implementing these recommendations. In February, 1983, it adopted regulations for the Mentor Teacher Program in conformity with SB 813.

Recommendation 9. The State Board of Education commends the State Department of Education for its plans to monitor carefully the effectiveness of California's Mentor Teacher Program and urges the Legislature to consider modification or expansion to provide a career ladder for teachers, with additional steps to those provided in SB 813.

9. Recognition of Outstanding Teachers

The Board applauds the steps taken by various organizations to recognize outstanding teachers, including the California Teachers Association, Delta Kappa Gamma, and the American Association of University Women.

The State Board itself has traditionally been involved with the Teacher of the Year Award and more recently with the Presidential Award of Excellence in Science and Mathematics Teaching.

The many outstanding candidates nominated for the awards in which the State Board has been involved have convinced the Board not only that there are many superb teachers in California, but also that many more than now are, deserve to be recognized for the superb quality of their teaching.

Recommendation 10. The State Board of Education urges all professional and community organizations that are concerned with the status of the teaching profession to establish awards to recognize outstanding teachers in their communities.

10. Staff Development

The rapid accumulation of new knowledge in most subject matter areas increasingly makes it necessary for teachers to engage in organized activities, such as taking courses, workshops, etc., to keep up to date in both content and methodology of teaching in their field.

¹² A Nation at Risk, p. 31.

The Board, therefore, applauds the initiatives undertaken by the Office of Staff Development of the State Department of Education designed to support local and regional implementation. These include:

- Teacher Education and Computer Centers
- Science Teacher Training Academy
- Mathematics Teacher Retraining Program
- Bilingual Teacher Training Assistance Program
- Federal Teacher Centers
- California Writing and Mathematics Program
- Special Education Resource Network

Research supports that the most purposeful staff development interventions are at the school level, where teachers and administrators work together to solve the curricular, instructional, assessment, and management problems of the organization.

As part of this effort, it is particularly important to provide additional opportunities for teachers to become familiar with successful teaching strategies in specific subject areas.

Recommendation 11. The State Board of Education urges the Legislature to provide for expansion of training opportunities for teachers, with emphasis on successful teaching strategies in specific subject areas, such as elementary mathematics, algebra, geometry, biology, literature, etc., rather than training in the more generic teaching strategies which is now the prevailing practice.

II. Recruitment of Teachers

As is by now well known, a serious shortage of teachers already exists in several fields, most notably in mathematics, science, and bilingual education. This shortage is expected to extend to all fields at both the elementary and secondary levels. Projections indicate that by 1991 California will need about 190,000 teachers which is equivalent to 10% of California's college students.

Yet less than one-tenth of 1% of the freshmen who entered the University of California in 1981 and 5.5% of students who took the college board examination in 1978 indicated a willingness to enter the teaching profession, and there are other indications that the students are not aware of the availability of teaching jobs.

The State Board has considered this a serious problem for almost two years and has taken numerous steps to address it:

(a) At the High School Level

At the March 1984 meeting of the Board, the Student Advisory Board on Education recommended that the State Board of Education support adoption of a program of Future Educators of California (FEC) by an appropriate organization. FEC would increase the appeal of job opportunities in the field of education and draw qualified students to fill these positions.

The Master Plan Committee has vigorously pursued this recommendation. Representatives of the California Teachers Association informed the committee that such an organization had at one time existed in California as Future

Teachers of America, later renamed Student Action for Education, an organization for high school students which CTA had sponsored in conjunction with NEA. It folded in the mid-70's as a result of declining enrollment, teacher lay-offs and lack of incentives for high school students to consider a career in education.

The Master Plan Committee has suggested to various organizations, in particular, the PTA, that they assume responsibility for organizing FEC, but no single organization has felt that it has the resources and manpower to take on this task. Hence, the Committee has decided, and the Board at its meeting on September 14, 1984, approved, that no one organization should be responsible for launching FEC and that a committee, formed of all interested parties, be appointed to consider this matter.

Recommendation 12. The State Board of Education recognizes the value of a formal organization whose purpose is to interest young people in teaching careers, and encourages the Department of Education to convene a meeting of all interested parties to explore sponsorship of the Future Educators of California and to keep the Blue Ribbon Commission on the Teaching Profession in California informed of their progress.

(b) At the College Level

The Board recognized early that many college students were unaware of the shortage of teachers, in particular, in certain areas. Hence, it sent on March 7, 1983, a letter to the chairs of the departments of education in all colleges and universities in the State urging them to organize meetings on their campuses in cooperation with their mathematics and science departments of all students interested in learning more about teaching careers in mathematics and science. The letter provided guidelines on how to organize and structure such a meeting based on a successful experiment made earlier on one California campus.

The Board was very pleased to learn that this recommendation was widely followed. The Board was, for example, informed by Linda Bunnell Jones, California State University Dean for Academic Program Improvement, in a letter of June 29, 1984, that CSU had moved "ahead to ask local faculty senate chairs on its campuses to hold meetings designed to interest students in teaching."

These efforts received added encouragement by the adoption of Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 111 on June 26, 1984, authored by Assemblywoman Teresa Hughes, resolving "that the University of California and the California State University take immediate steps in light of the initiatives in Chapter 498 of the Statutes of 1983, to encourage a greater number and broader spectrum of college students to enter teacher education programs and to become teacher trainees, ..."

Recommendation 13. The State Board of Education applauds the efforts by the Legislature and California's institutions of higher education to inform college students about the current teacher shortage. The Board recommends that these efforts be expanded so that all college students in California are made aware of the needs and opportunities for teachers and, further, that these efforts be continued as a regular ongoing activity.

12. Teacher Dismissal and Separation

The Master Plan Committee has devoted a great deal of attention to the problem of getting incompetent teachers out of the profession. Its investigation clearly revealed that dismissal of tenured teachers for incompetence is a relatively rare occurrence. It found as a good source for studies on teacher dismissal the work done by Professor Edwin M. Bridges of Stanford University.¹³ His findings include that "A search of California's employment records for the 40-year period 1933-73 revealed no case in which a teacher had been dismissed for incompetence."

The failure to dismiss incompetent teachers is undoubtedly largely due to a fear that such dismissal might be overturned by the courts. Yet, statistics do not support this fear. As Professor Bridges notes: "Nationwide, approximately two-thirds of the teacher dismissal decisions are upheld in the court system."

Contrary to widespread perception, teacher organizations support dismissal of incompetent teachers, provided due process is maintained in such dismissal. To assist in this effort, the California Teachers Association has prepared an issue paper, The Need for Due Process Dismissal (Tenure) Laws, available from the CTA office, 1705 Murchison Drive, Burlingame, CA 94010.

Critical to due process in dismissal procedures is an appropriate teacher evaluation system in the school which is equally needed for many other aspects of improving the quality of teaching, including the selection of mentor teachers and other career-ladder appointments. An excellent account of desirable practices for teacher evaluation has been prepared by the Rand Corporation.¹⁴

The Master Plan Committee's consultation with school districts reveals that they are increasingly instituting procedures to separate incompetent teachers from the profession by means other than dismissal. They include early retirement incentive programs, reduced workload with special emphasis on assignments that the teacher involved can handle satisfactorily, suspension for evaluation that call for measures less severe than dismissal, or buying out part of the teacher's contract.

Recommendation 14. The State Board of Education commends those districts which have adopted procedures for separation of incompetent teachers by a variety of professional means, including the dismissal process, and urges those which have not as yet done so to follow their lead. In all cases involving dismissals, it is, of course, essential that established due process procedures are followed.

¹³The Identification, Remediation and Dismissal of Incompetent Teachers, Edwin M. Bridges with the assistance of Barry Groves, published by the Association of California School Administrators' Foundation for Educational Administration, 1984.

¹⁴Teacher Evaluation: A Study of Effective Practices, The Rand Corporation, June 1984.

13. The Role of the Principal

The Superintendent's Task Force on School Effectiveness has identified "instructional leadership" as one of the 11 major "school effectiveness" factors.

Also "The Effective School Report"¹⁵ in an article on "The Five Correlates of an Effective School" lists "Leadership" as number two following "School Climate." It notes that "appropriate and effective leadership is essential in any successful organization. More often than not, the attitudes conveyed by the individual in the leadership position present themselves throughout the organization. Therefore, the attitude, as well as the degree of involvement, of an effective principal is very important."

Accordingly, the Master Plan Committee has considered this in detail in consultation with the professional organizations vitally interested in this.

(a) Definition of the Role of the Principal

At its meeting on September 14, 1984, the Board unanimously approved the following resolution defining the role of the principal.

WHEREAS, The National Commission on Excellence in Education has recommended that "citizens across the Nation hold educators and elected officials responsible for providing the leadership necessary to achieve these reforms" and that "principals and superintendents must play a crucial leadership role in developing school and community support" for these reforms, and

WHEREAS, The Task Force on School Effectiveness, appointed in early 1983 by Superintendent of Public Instruction, Bill Honig, has found that "the primary goals of effective schools are academic ones that focus on student learning and achievement," and

WHEREAS, The roles a principal plays as instructional leader, school manager, and developer of community support require both a carefully developed screening procedure for selecting principals and an ongoing training program for those serving in that position, and

WHEREAS, There has occurred in many schools an imbalance in these roles, because of outside pressures, to the detriment of the instructional leadership role,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That all districts develop a recruiting strategy and screening process for the selection of the principals in their district, and

¹⁵"The Effective School Report" from Research and Practice, Vol. 1, No. 1, November, 1983, p. 3.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That in order to allow principals to be effective instructional leaders, they be chosen from those with successful teaching experience, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That it is desirable for the principal as an instructional leader to become the model for the blending of theory and practice by periodically serving as demonstration teacher to the staff, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That supervision and evaluation of administrators be based primarily on their responsibilities as instructional leaders, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That how the principal spends his or her time managing the school's human and material resources, including supervision and evaluation of teachers, reflects the priority of instructional leadership, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That districts adopt a written policy for ongoing professional development for administrators aligned with the curriculum and instructional leadership goals of the district, and that efforts be made to provide appropriate resources to support this development, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That superintendents of districts minimize assigning responsibilities to principals which would interfere with their ability to serve as effective instructional leaders in their schools, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That collaborative ventures to improve instructional leadership by local districts, county offices of education, institutions of higher education, Association of California School Administrators, California School Boards Association, private foundations, industry, Commission on Teacher Credentialing, the State Board of Education, and the State Department of Education be vigorously supported by each of these agencies.

The Board was pleased to be informed that other organizations plan to submit this resolution for possible endorsement to their governing bodies.

Recommendation 15. The State Board of Education recommends that the State Department of Education send a copy of this resolution to all school districts and school boards together with the names of other organizations that may have endorsed it by the time of the mailing.

(b) Selection of Principals, Including Assessment and Training

The Board applauds the recent efforts of school districts to establish selection procedures for principals and to make use of the services of assessment centers.

To assist districts in this effort, the State Department of Education has established a School Leadership Unit. Its agenda is to make curricular and instructional leadership central to four leverage points that can influence districts and school leadership, namely:

- recruitment and selection of administrators,
- preparation (preservice) of school administrators,
- ongoing professional development and training (inservice) of practicing administrators
- supervision and evaluation of administrators.

The School Leadership Unit has recently formed an Advisory Council which has developed consensus statements. Two objectives have guided the work of the School Leadership Unit and its Advisory Council:

1. To build models for all four leverage points that include specifications, methods, and procedures.
2. To identify implementation strategies for each model and identify implications for legislation, new efforts, and policies.

Recommendation 16. The State Board of Education commends the efforts of the State Department of Education's School Leadership Unit and its Advisory Council to address the selection, preparation, training, supervision and evaluation of administrators and urges that these efforts be continued vigorously and upon completion widely disseminated to all segments of the educational community.